Long Beach Continuum of Care
Homeless Management Information System

Mission Statement

The Department of Health and Human Services, Homeless Services Division will implement the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to:

- Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery to the homeless
- Standardize data collection, track performance measurements and improve the accuracy of outcome reporting
- Promote more responsive policies to address homelessness

The Homeless Services Division will assess trend data on homeless services to better gauge effectiveness and utilization patterns of services across the Continuum of Care (CoC), over time, in an effort to reduce duplicate efforts for both providers and recipients of homeless services.

Vision

The Long Beach Homeless Services Division is dedicated to providing effective coordination of vital human services through the citywide Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to streamline the delivery of services for persons experiencing homelessness. All projects funded by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) are required to participate in the HMIS. However, it is the vision of Homeless Services to engage all service providers that provide service to the homeless in Long Beach. The systems' effectiveness can only be enhanced by the broadest level of participation and coordination of resources to end homelessness in the City of Long Beach.

The HMIS will:

- Ensure persons experiencing a housing crisis receive streamlined referrals, coordinated services, and timely access to essential resources.
- Enable agencies to track referrals and services provided, report outcomes, and manage client data using accessible, user-friendly and secured technology.
- Enhance the ability of policy makers and advocates to gauge the extent of homelessness and plan services appropriately throughout the City of Long Beach.

Background

An HMIS is computerized data collection software that facilitates the collection of information from homeless individuals and families using residential or other homeless assistance services and stores that data in an electronic format.

In 2001, Congress directed the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to ensure that homeless programs using federal funds participate in local

systems to track the use of supportive services and housing resources. HUD requires local jurisdictions to implement an HMIS to better understand the size and characteristics of the homeless population, analyze local patterns of service usage, and assess local service needs. HUD's three goals of an HMIS are: 1) to bring the power of technology to the day-to-day operations of individual housing and supportive service providers; 2) link housing and service providers within a local community into more coordinated and effective delivery systems for the benefit of homeless clients; and 3) obtain and report critical aggregate information about the characteristics and service needs of homeless persons.

Homeless Service Providers funded by the following HUD components are mandated to participate in the HMIS:

- Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG)
- Supportive Housing Program (SHP)
- Shelter Plus Care (S+C)
- Single Room Occupancy Moderate Rehabilitation (SRO)
- Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA)

Homeless Service programs that receive other sources of funding are not mandated, but are encouraged to participate in HMIS. The Homeless Services Division strongly encourages all service providers citywide to become trained and authorized users of the HMIS technology to streamline linkages and to improve service coordination for people experiencing homelessness in the Long Beach Community.

HMIS Implementation for Domestic Violence Programs Deferred

HUD has carefully considered the special circumstances associated with victims of domestic violence and domestic violence programs with respect to participation in HMIS. It is understood that unlike other special populations, victims of domestic violence could be physically at risk if individuals who intend to cause them harm are able to obtain personal information from an HMIS with inadequate security and confidentiality protections. At the same time, domestic violence programs play an important role in many CoCs. Their lack of participation in an HMIS means that it will not be possible to obtain an accurate unduplicated count of homeless persons in a community or adequately understand the needs of the homeless population.

The Violence Against Women Act of 2006, Section 605 amends the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) statute in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act to prohibit any victim service provider from entering personally identifying information about any victim into the HMIS database. Domestic violence victim service providers may be asked to share non-personally identifying information after a public comment period. With this pending legislation, the City of Long Beach has deferred implementation of HMIS for agencies providing domestic violence services.

For additional information regarding the implementation of HMIS in Long Beach,

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